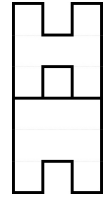


48. Well



The Sequence - When Something Is Trapped at the Top, It Must Revert at the Bottom. This Is Why the Well Hexagram Is Next.

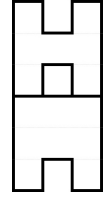
This concerns its earlier remark that '**if something rises ceaselessly**, it will necessarily be **trapped**.'

- It signifies that if something rises ceaselessly and is trapped at the top, it **will necessarily revert to** the **bottom**.
- Of all the things that are below, none is like the well, and so the Well hexagram succeeds the Trap hexagram.

In the Procedure of Heaven, the materials of life begin at a minimum and rise upward to a maximum. Whenever the materials of a virtue continuously rise upward to the top, the result is that the virtue will eventually lose the materials to continue growing and will be unable to continue rising any further. Consequently, the rising tendencies will reach their highest levels, before losing the materials needed to continue and reverting back to the lowest levels to rise up again.

When I am Understanding Well, I am embodying the imagery of constant virtues that are never depleted or excessive. When I consider all of the many things that are below our sky, the virtues of Understanding Well are like nothing else around. Since the nourishment of Understanding Well is always constant and is never depleted, the sign and symbolism of Understanding Well follows after the sign of being trapped and depleted of resources to the maximum extent.

The Symbol - Above the Tree, There Is Water: Well.



As for the trigrams, the Pit trigram is above and the Low trigram below.

- The symbol of the Pit trigram is water, the symbol of the Low trigram is a tree.
- The meaning of the Low trigram is entry; the tree in turn is the symbol of a tool (a **bucket**).
- The tree **enters** the **water** below it, and **then ascends** through the water, which symbolizes **drawing water from a well**.

The **tree receives water** and **ascends**, symbolizing a tool (a **bucket**) that **draws water, which then goes out from the well**.

In the Sign of Understanding Well, the symbol of wind lowing and wood growing is below and the symbol of water streaming is above. Metaphorically, I am depicting the wood growing as a bucket that is dipping below the surface of the water, and will rise up to draw nourishment from the well.

The wood growing into a bucket is symbolic of both the receptivity of wood growing, and also the lowliness of wind lowing. Lowliness is the virtue identified in the Sign of Wind Lowing and Wood Growing as the tendency which supports entry into a new location. In the Sign of Understanding Well, the wooden bucket is making a lowly entry into the water and is about to be raised up to retrieve the nourishment. The wood growing is depicted in the bucket being raised up from the well and distributing the water to others that have journeyed to the well.

Noble people use it to **reassure the people** and **persuade them for each other's sake**.

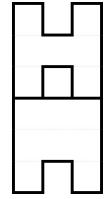
When noble people gaze on the symbol of the Well hexagram, they **make the virtue of the well into their law**, using it as the way of reassuring and **encouraging** the people, **persuading** and **exhorting** them to **help each other**.

- To reassure and encourage the people is to **make the function of the well into one's law**, while to **persuade the people to help each other** is to make the influence of the well into **one's law**.

The function of Understanding Well is to nourish people and things. When I am contemplating the meaning of the Sign of Understanding Well, I am focused on embodying the limitless and nourishing virtues of the Understanding Well. I am using the imagery of limitless wisdom to reassure others around me, and I am persuading

and encouraging people to help each other, as well. I am embodying the imagery of Understanding Well and persuading others to help one another for their own benefits and for the benefits of one another, not myself. I am manifesting the function of Understanding Well by embracing its limitless virtues, by sharing the beneficial nourishment with others, and by encouraging everyone to help one another as a beneficial result.

The Judgment - Well: One May Modify the District but Not the Well.



A well is a thing that **is constant** and **may not be modified**.

- The **district** may be **modified** and put **someplace else**, but the **well** may **not be relocated**.
- This is why the judgment says: '**One may modify the district but not the well**'.

'One may modify the district but not the well': because of its firmness and centrality.

The **district may be modified**, but the **well** may **not** be **relocated** - this, too, indicates **the constancy of its virtue**.

- The second and fifth lines have **the virtues of firmness and centrality**.
- Since they are like this, the powers of the trigrams align with the meaning of the hexagram.

It Is Not Deprived of Anything, and It **Does Not Acquire Anything**. The **Journey Arrives at the Well, and at the Well Again**.

One **draws from it and it is not drained**; one **gives to it and it is not filled**: 'It is not deprived of anything, and it does not acquire anything.'

- **Everyone who reaches it can make use of its function**: 'The journey arrives at the well, and at the well again.'
- 'It is not deprived of anything, and it does not acquire anything': its virtue is constant.
- 'The journey arrives at the well, and at the well again': its function is all-encompassing - this is the way of the well.

The way of Understanding Well is to be constantly filled with nourishing virtues that cost nothing to provide to others. Everyone can make the journey to Understanding Well and then travel back again. The Understanding Well is not gaining anything and is not losing anything either.

Anyone walking on a journey can arrive at Understanding Well, can wander away, and can then arrive at Understanding Well again. Anyone can draw from Understanding Well and nothing is lost. The well did not acquire anything, and lost nothing to provide the nourishment. In this way, a well of virtues remains constant and unchanged.

Something Is Lowered Into the Water and Brings the Water Up: Well.

'Something is lowered' so that it enters the water below, and it 'brings the water up: Well.'

- The well's nourishment of things is never depleted, and does not cease.
- Though it is **put to use**, it **is not drained**, and so its **virtue is constant**.

When a bucket is lowered into and retrieves the water of a well of clean (non-conflicting) virtues, then the nourishment is everlasting and the well never loses any of its contents. The **tendencies of Understanding Well remain constant**. The well is being used to nourish others with its virtues, but it is never drained or depleted.

To Approach its **Extremity Is Not Yet To Pull From the Well**.

'To approach' is to be almost there, while 'to pull' is to use the rope.

The well has the **function** of **sustaining things** as its task.

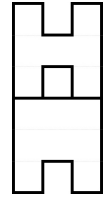
- Those who are almost at its extremity have not yet made use of its function.
- The same hold for those who have not yet let anything down so as to pull from the well.

'To approach its extremity is not yet to pull from the well': it has not yet accomplished anything.

When one is almost at its extremity but has not yet made use of its function, it is the same as 'not yet to pull from the well.'

- The well has the function of sustaining things as its task.
- When the **water goes out**, it has **performed** its **function**.
- **If** the water does **not** yet go out, **how could it have accomplished anything?**

The minimum and maximum efforts of doing nothing, or continuing to dig without finding any usable water, are equally the same. I am not drawing water from the well. Either way, I am not making use of the well and the well is not nourishing people and things. If water has not gone out, then how can I believe that the well has accomplished anything? The task of the well is to sustain and, at the extreme minimum and maximum, it has not yet been accomplished.



Concerning the way of noble people, it is esteemed only when brought to completion.

- And so the **five grains**, while still **unripe**, are **not equal to** their **wild cousins**.
- ('The nourishing grains, once grown to completion are better than grains that are not fully developed into a proper nourishing form. To grow in the wild is better than not growing at all.')
- **To dig a seventy-two foot well without reaching a spring** is similar to deserting the well. ('When I am digging a well for water, if I am reaching the point where no nourishment is found, and leaving, then I am the same as leaving and deserting the well.')
- **To have the function of sustaining things without reaching them is similar to not having the function**. ('When the function is to sustain, and fails to do so, then it is the same as not accomplishing the purpose at all.')

If the Bucket Is Crippled, There Will Be Misfortune.

Those whose 'bucket is crippled' and defeated will lose it.

- They will be deprived of its function, and as a result, 'there will be misfortune.'
- To be crippled is to be crushed and defeated.

'The bucket is crippled': misfortune is the result.

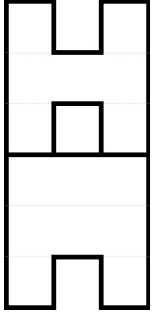
When water is brought up in the bucket, it **performs its function**.

- **If** 'the **bucket** is crippled' and **defeated, it will not perform its function**, and 'misfortune is the result.'

The bucket performs its function when it dips into water and draws it back up. When a bucket has been broken, then it is unable to descend into and draw out the water. Some form of bad result will occur, and the purpose of the bucket will not be completed.

On the First Terrain of Understanding Well, I am at a muddy well. There is no nourishment left at the old well, and nobody drinks from this new well, either.

On the First Terrain of Understanding Well, I am elaborating on the meaning of things by using a metaphorical well, and a bucket.



On the first terrain, I am placed in a position that is appropriately embodied by a tendency to rise and lead, but **in the circumstances of Understanding Well, I am occupying the position** with a tendency **to descend** and yield. On the fourth terrain, the corresponding line above, **the great minister** is occupying the terrain with another tendency **to descend and yield**. Consequently, when I and my corresponding line, are both occupying our positions with tendencies to descend and yield, then I am not corresponding with the great minister and we are not supporting one another, either. Metaphorically, I am **water that is not being brought up and out** of a well to offer nourishment.

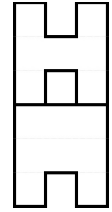
Since the water of this well is not rising to offer nourishment and sustain anything at all, I am metaphorically describing **the well as being one from which nobody is able to drink**. **The well is full of 'muddy' water that is offensive, is soiled with waste, and it stinks**. On the first terrain of understanding well, **I am at the bottom of the well and my placement is within this stinking 'mud.'**

The **purpose** of a well is **to nourish** the people **with drinkable water**. **Without any drinkable water**, a well is basically **without** any **function** at all and, consequently, it will be **abandoned**. **People properly using a well** are drawing water up and **nourishing**. **Birds and animals also find a well and do the same**. Like the people, **birds and animals also will not bother to travel to a well that cannot provide clean nourishment**. The **root purpose** of a well is **to nourish** and **sustain** the people. *When the well **does not nourish** the people, **then** birds and **animals will also not bother to make the journey**.*

On the bottom terrain of Understanding Well, I am **occupying the position at the very bottom** in a way that does not rise and lead. Metaphorically, I am the muddy, stinky, water that will not rise. Consequently, **no one can** and **receive nourishment** and should not drink from the well.

In this moment, I am **facing the time to sustain** other people, and things, **but I have weak power** or **no power** at all, and without additional support, I am **unable to reach** those **things that I am designed to help**. **Consequently**, I am a well that is being **abandoned because the water is muddy, stinky, and is not good to be brought to the surface to provide nourishment**.

On the Second Terrain of Understanding Well, I Am **at a Well** With a **Leak in the Bottom** and I Am Using **a Broken Bucket**



On the second terrain, I am within the lower symbol, and I am occupying my position with a firm tendency to rise and lead. On the fifth, and corresponding terrain, the position of the ruler is occupied by another firm disposition to rise and lead. Consequently, I am not in a straightforward correspondence with the ruler and, instead, I am corresponding with and drawing closer to the people on the lowest terrain of heaven. If the ruler and I were in agreement, then the way of my position on the second terrain would rise up to nourish a larger region.

Metaphorically, I am water that has risen to the middle of the lower area, and drawn closer to the ground. Similarly, if I were able to draw the water out of Understanding Well to a middle position, the lack of straightforward correspondence with the ruler on the fifth terrain prevents me from properly distributing the nourishment. In this way, I am metaphorically holding a bucket that is broken and leaking out the water while trying to share.

The way of water in a well is to rise upward, and out of the top, to be carried in a bucket or vessel to nourish the people and things nearby. Rather than rising out of the top of the well to nourish the people and things, the muddy and foul water is **shooting out of the side of the well** near the ground and then **spreading around the ground like a valley pouring out a river**. The water of this well is becoming muddy and foul around the bottom.

The foul and muddy water is only **streaming around the** small crayfish, frogs, and other tiny **things within the mud**. Here, the water is both: not nourishing, and is also only pouring out over a minimally beneficial area. This is not the way of understanding well.

In the circumstances of Understanding Well, when I am rising to lead, the root of my success requires an ability to nourish those people and things nearby, and I am unable to achieve that purpose because, not only is the well broken at the bottom, I am also using a bucket that is broken and leaks water, as well. Here, on the second terrain of Understanding Well, I am also unable to accomplish a function of distributing nourishment.

Question from a reader: Both the first and the second positions were unable to accomplish their purpose in the circumstances of Understanding Well, and in both

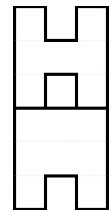
circumstances the failure is because of a lack of straightforward correspondence, and yet neither position has been worthy of fault or blame? Why not? Could they not have done better?

Answer: Blame for faults is found in the excessiveness of a manner or way, and regrets arise after something that was once possessed is now lost. There simply is not a corresponding position of support carry out the function. Neither the first nor the second positions have been worthy of any blame and have lost nothing to regret.

Question from a reader: Is it not an excess that the center position is drawing closer to the initial line?

Answer: The second position is centered, and cannot ascend because of a lack of straightforward correspondence. The second position has no support to ascend. The second position is drawing close to the lowest position while Understanding Well that there is no support above. The closeness of the centered position to the lower position is not the reason why the position is unable to accomplish its function.

On the Fourth Terrain of Understanding Well, I Am at a Working Well and There Is no Reason for Blame.



On the Fourth Terrain of Understanding Well, I am in a position in the upper symbol, and I am occupying a position near the ruler. In this lofty and important placement, I am corresponding straightforwardly with the ruler's position immediately above, and I am centered within the entire circumstances of both the upper and lower divisions.

Additionally, I am placed here with a disposition to descend and yield in a position that is properly occupied in this way. I am still in the lower position of the upper division of Understanding Well, but I am successfully corresponding in a straightforward way to the position immediately above, and I am centered.

Metaphorically, I am positioned at a well that has been repaired at the bottom. I am still not able to have a far reaching influence to nourish everyone, but if I remain vigilant in managing my own way, then I am not losing anything and should remain free of regrets.

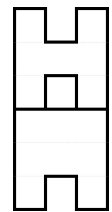
However, I am remaining aware of the need to constantly correct my own views when I am Understanding Well, and to be orderly rather than disorderly in my inclinations. It

is not the way of Understanding Well, to be failing to correct one's own virtues and failing to be orderly in one's own life because this would also be neglecting the task of sharing the clean nourishment of Understanding Well to others. This failure to correct oneself, while also Understanding Well, is cause for greater blame than normal.

From these inclinations to remain central, to be vigilant of any need for corrections, and to maintain a correspondence with the ruling position above, then I am able to guard my placement and not become worthy of any blame for being excessively too little or too much.

At this position, I still remain unable to do anything more than accomplish my task and avoid blame. I am not neglecting my own inclinations to Understand Well, and I am providing the nourishment to the ruling line above. In contrast, if I were to be attempting to rise and lead instead of descending to yield, then I would be unable to share this nourishment and I would be excessively too little in maintaining my own proper way.

On the Fifth Terrain of Understanding Well, I Am Drinking From a Sweet and Refreshingly Cold Spring.



On the Fifth Terrain of Understanding Well, I am placed in the position of the ruler and I am properly occupying this position with a firm disposition to rise and lead. I also am located in the center of the upper division.

This placement and disposition is a fitting way to thoroughly explore all of the power, respect, and virtues of a ruling leader and is also a fitting way to fully explain the good and beautiful way of Understanding Well.

Metaphorically, I am arriving at an icy, cold, spring that tastes sweet and refreshing! This is the best way of Understanding Well and is also the best that the well can do. The water is clean, the nourishment is clear, and the taste is appealing. However, there is not yet a beneficial result and the task of Understanding Well still remains to be completed.

To complete the function of Understanding Well, the refreshing water must be brought out of the top of the well and distributed to others for nourishment. For the way of Understanding Well, itself, being a clean, sweet and refreshing source is the best it can do.

I am doing my best in the ruling position of Understanding Well, when I am remaining central and straightforward about the availability of this refreshing nourishment. This is the way of Understanding Well that is of the maximum amount of that which is good.